

*Honors Freshman Seminar: Health and Society*  
Fall, 2007  
T & Th 1:30-2:50  
Robeson 205

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### **Overview**

This course looks at the health care from the perspective of patients, communities, and health care providers. We will discuss the history of the American health care system and the impact of disease, public health measures, and medical research.

A seminar differs from other classes in that it is a collective experience that requires a sense of intellectual community. Our goal is to develop an open and continuing conversation about health and society in the United States through a discussion of the assigned books. In order to facilitate discussion, each student will come to class with a response to the readings and a set of discussion questions. Regular attendance and active participation is required. We will discuss in class the best way to take notes on the assigned reading.

### **Grading:**

Attendance and participation	20%
Reading Responses & Questions	50%
2 Book Reviews	30%

### **Assignments:**

**Book Reviews:** You will be writing a brief (3-4 page) of two of the assigned books. You can select the books you wish to review. This assignment will be discussed in class and detailed information will be posted on Sakai. You should note, however, that a book review is different than a book report. It is an evaluation, **not** a summary of the contents. The major question you need to answer is whether or not the book illuminates important aspects of health care and society. This means that as you read you will need to take careful notes about the book and we will discuss how to do this in class.

**Reading Responses:** You must write a brief, 1 page response to the assigned reading. You can write about what you found interesting and why, or what you found

confusing and why. For example, if you are reading about someone's reaction to an encounter with a medical professional you might reflect on why you identified with the patient, or the doctor, or neither, or both, or whether the encounter reminded you of something you'd experienced or something we'd discussed in class. Or, you might write about what the encounter suggests about our society. In short, the response must show me that you are thinking about what you have read and are reacting to it in an intelligent, curious, thoughtful way. You should feel free to write in the first person and to disagree with what you read. The grading of the responses is based on the degree of engagement with the assigned reading and the clarity of the writing.

In addition to the reaction page you should write at least two questions that we can discuss in class. A discussion question doesn't ask for information but raises an issue that requires clarification and analysis and thus elicits a variety of responses.

You should feel free to also submit information questions. These are questions about things in the reading that you do not understand.

As with any paper, you need to carefully proofread your reading responses to check for spelling and grammatical errors and to make sure that when you quote from the reading you give a citation. It is fine if you simply want to put the page number in parentheses following the quote.

Note, I will not start grading your responses and questions until I've had a chance to read and comment on several of them and created a sample sheet, so that you will have a sense of what is expected.

## **Theme 1: The Culture of Biomedicine**

Sept. 4: Introduction

Sept. 6: Reading: *The Spirit Catches You*, pp. 3-59  
Due: reading response and questions

Sept. 11: Reading: *The Spirit Catches You*, pp. 60-118  
Due: reading response and questions

Sept. 13: No Class

Sept. 18: Reading: *The Spirit Catches You*, pp. 119-180  
Due: reading response and questions

Sept. 20: Reading: *The Spirit Catches You*, pp. 181-249  
Due: reading response and questions

Sept. 25: Reading: *The Spirit Catches You*, pp. 250-288  
Due: Review of *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

## **Theme 2: Disease and Society**

Sept. 27: Reading: *Silent Travelers*, pp. 31-104 and preface  
Due: reading response and questions

Oct 2: Reading: *Silent Travelers*, pp. 105-196  
Due: reading response and questions

Oct 4: Film: *Influenza*, 1918

Oct 9: *Silent Travelers*, pp. 197-272  
Due: Review of *Silent Travelers*

## **Theme 3: Human Subjects and Human Values**

Oct. 11: Reading: *Bad Blood* pp. 1-90,  
Due: reading response and questions

Oct. 16: Reading: *Bad Blood*, pp. 91-150  
Due: reading response and questions

Oct 18: Reading: *Bad Blood*, pp. 151-219

Due: reading response and questions

Oct. 23 Film: *Miss Evers' Boys*

Due: Review of *Bad Blood*

#### **Theme 4: Health Care Disparities**

Oct 25: Reading: *Mama Might Be Better Off Dead*, pp. 1-59

Due: reading response and questions

Oct. 30: Reading: *Mama Might Be Better Off Dead*, pp. 60-110

Due: reading response and questions

Nov. 1: Reading: *Mama Might Be Better Off Dead* pp. 111-166.

Due: reading response and questions

Nov. 6: Reading: *Mama Might Be Better Off Dead*. pp. 167-212

Due: reading response and questions

Nov 8: Film: *Last Angry Man*

Reading: *Mama Might Be Better Off Dead*. pp. 213-262

Due: reading responses and questions

Nov. 13: Reading: *Mama Might Be Better Off Dead*, pp. 243-314

Due: Review of *Mama Might Be Better Off Dead*

Nov 15: No Class

#### **Theme 5: A Global View of Health and Healing**

Nov 20: Reading: *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, pp. 1-95

Due: reading response and questions

Nov 27: Reading: *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, pp. 96-158

Due: reading response and questions

Dec. 4: Reading: *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, pp. 159-219

Due: reading response and questions

Dec. 6: Film: *Arrowsmith*

Reading: *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, pp. 220-260

Due: reading responses and questions

Dec. 11: Reading: *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, pp. 261-301

Due: Review of *Mountains Beyond Mountains*